

Frequently Asked Questions about the Rockfish Program Proposed Rule

Question	Rockfish Program
What is the basic structure of the Program?	<p>The Rockfish Pilot Program (Program) allocates a long-term harvest privilege to specific harvesters, and the ability to receive and process rockfish to specific processors in the Central Gulf of Alaska (CGOA) based on their historic harvesting and processing activities during a specific time frame. The Program is intended to “rationalize” CGOA rockfish fisheries by providing participants greater economic stability by reducing the “race for fish” that occurs in derby-style fisheries. Congress provided specific authorization to NOAA Fisheries to implement this Program in Public Law 108-299. This statute designates the basic structure of the Program, the years to be considered for historic participation for harvesters and processors, establishes a special entry-level fishery for harvesters and processors who are not eligible to receive exclusive harvesting and processing privileges, and specifies that this Program will last for two years – beginning during the 2007 fishing year, and lasting through December 31, 2008.</p> <p>To be consistent with terms used in other rationalization programs, NOAA Fisheries uses the term Rockfish quota share (QS) to describe the long-term harvest privilege provided to harvesters rather than the terms “catch history” or “historic shares.” The use of the term Rockfish QS for this program is consistent with the way we describe long-term harvest privileges in other fisheries such as the Halibut and Sablefish IFQ Program, and the Crab Rationalization Program. The use of this term does not change the nature of the privilege recommended by the Council. Once Rockfish QS is issued to an eligible harvester, it can be used by the participant to receive an exclusive annual harvest privilege (similar to IFQs) only for those participants that join cooperatives with other participants. The amount of the annual privilege, which we call cooperative fishing quota (CFQ), is based on the collective Rockfish QS holdings of the cooperative members. A cooperative, not the individual cooperative members, holds the CFQ. If a participant with Rockfish QS does not wish to join a cooperative, that person can participate in a limited access fishery with other participants with Rockfish QS, but they would compete for the limited access fishery TAC with those other participants. The TAC issued to a specific limited access fishery is the amount left over after the CFQ has been allocated to cooperatives.</p>
Which fishery sectors can participate in the Program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trawl catcher/processors (C/Ps) and trawl catcher vessels (CVs) in Central GOA rockfish fisheries • Processors who meet minimum processing requirements can associate with CV cooperatives • Also, an entry level fishery is available for fixed gear and trawl CVs not eligible to receive Rockfish QS, and processors not eligible to receive fish harvested by harvesters with Rockfish QS.
Do I have to apply to participate in the Program?	<p>Yes, if you do not apply, you will not receive QS, or be permitted as a processor eligible to receive and process rockfish from cooperatives or the limited access fishery. NMFS must receive a complete Application to Participate in the Rockfish Program by 5:00 p.m., Alaska local time on December 1, 2006. This is a one time application.</p>
How can I get an application?	<p>NOAA Fisheries will send out applications to all LLP holders and processing facilities that we know may be qualified. We will also mail applications to anyone who requests one, and we will post the application forms on our website (http://www.fakr.noaa.gov) once the final rule is published and effective. Application forms will not be available until then.</p>

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What information is required in the application?	The proposed rule lists all of the information required including basic contact information, vessel, LLP license, and processing facility landing, processing, and ownership information.
What happens if my Application to Participate in the Program is approved by NOAA Fisheries?	NOAA Fisheries will issue you QS for each of the primary rockfish species for use in a specific sector (the CV or C/P sector). The QS for each of the primary rockfish fisheries will be fixed to the LLP license that was used to qualify for the legal landings.
How can participants fish under the Program?	<p>Each year, eligible participants can choose to coordinate with other vessel owners and processors (in the CV sector) and form a cooperative which receives CFQ based on the QS holdings of the members. Alternatively, an eligible harvester can participate in a limited access fishery. In addition, persons holding LLP licenses in the catcher/processor sector can choose to “Opt-out” of many components of the Program. A similar provision is not available to LLP holders in the catcher vessel sector. Each year, persons not eligible for the main Program can choose to participate in the entry-level fishery.</p> <p>If you receive Rockfish QS Applications for CFQ (to join a cooperative and receive CFQ), the Limited Access Fishery (one fishery for the CV sector, another for the C/P sector), and “Opt-out” (for the C/P sector) applications are due on December 1, 2006.</p> <p>Applications to participate in the entry-level fishery (for trawl CVs, fixed gear CVs, and processors) are also due on December 1, 2006.</p>
How many persons are eligible to participate?	<p>We do not know exactly how many persons are eligible because persons may own multiple vessels or processing facilities, but we do know the number of vessels and processing facilities that are eligible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 catcher/processor LLP licenses; • 48 catcher vessel LLP licenses; • 6 processors. <p>In addition, any person who is not eligible to receive QS, but is otherwise able to fish in the CGOA in the trawl CV and fixed-gear CV sector (i.e., they hold an LLP license with a CGOA endorsement) may choose to join the entry-level fishery. We estimate that 171 trawl vessels and 900 non-trawl vessels could participate in the entry level fishery, but actual participation is likely to be much lower. A number of processors may choose to participate in the entry level fishery, but we cannot predict how many.</p>
Which Species are	Primary Species

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allocated QS?	CGOA Pacific ocean perch (POP) CGOA pelagic shelf rockfish CGOA northern rockfish
Who is eligible to receive a QS allocation?	LLP license holders (Eligible Rockfish Harvesters) who <ul style="list-style-type: none"> hold a fully transferable LLP license derived from, or used on, a trawl vessel with catch history resulting in “legal landings” in the three allocated CGOA rockfish fisheries in 1996-2002 during specific directed fishing seasons; and apply to participate in a timely fashion during the initial Rockfish QS application period.
How does NMFS determine the “legal landings” that are used to allocate QS?	NMFS would establish an Official Record with legal landings associated with all fully transferable LLP licenses based on the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) data set. Legal landings would include all landings made in compliance with state and Federal landing requirements during specific target season dates (established in a table) during the qualifying years (different years could be used for each species). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Best 5 of 7 years from 1996-2002. C/V sector would use fish ticket data C/P sector would use weekly production reports (WPR) based on retained catch for eligible LLP licenses/total retained catch by all harvesters. Catch that was processed into meal would not be considered as a “legal landing” that results in QS.
How is the QS amount calculated?	After picking the best 5 years (the years with the highest poundage) between 1996 and 2002, QS is allocated for each primary rockfish species (<i>s</i>) for each fully transferable LLP license (<i>l</i>) held by an Eligible Rockfish Harvester by the following procedure: $\text{Highest Five Years}_{ls} / \text{All Highest Five Years}_s \times 100 = \text{Percentage of the Total}_{ls}$ <p>The Percentage of the Total_{ls} is multiplied by the initial QS pool for that species to give the QS units for that LLP license. The initial QS pool, in units, is equal to the pounds of TAC in 2002 that was assigned for that primary rockfish species (see Table 28 in the Proposed Rule).</p>
What are the requirements for a processor to participate in the Program?	A person must own a processing facility that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> processed not less than 250 mt of aggregate Central GOA rockfish during any four of five calendar years from 1996- 2000 (i.e., 250 mt in each year) during the target fishery seasons (established in the regulations under Table 28); or owns the processing history of a qualified facility through the terms of a clear and unambiguous contract.
What is the Processor Qualifying Period?	The Processor Qualifying Period is the four-of-five year period selected by an eligible processor at the time of application that establishes the landings of eligible catcher vessel harvesters that can be associated with that processor for purposes of forming a

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	cooperative. Eligible harvesters representing at least 75% of the legal landings during the Processor Qualifying Period must agree to form a cooperative in association with that processor.
Where can an eligible processor receive catch?	An eligible processor can only receive catch in the community where those fish were originally received. Based on the Council analysis, the City of Kodiak is the only community where rockfish landings from eligible processors may be received.
Who must deliver to an eligible processor?	CV cooperatives must deliver to the processor with whom they have an “association.” They cannot deliver to another eligible processor. Participants in the CV limited access fishery can deliver to any eligible processor (there are processing limits however for processors).
Where can CVs in the entry level fishery deliver catch?	CV trawl and fixed gear vessels cannot deliver to eligible processors. They must deliver to processors that specifically join the entry level fishery during the annual entry level fishery application process (applications are due on December 1). These processors cannot be eligible for the cooperative/limited access portion of the Program. Entry level harvesters must have a letter from their processor certifying that they have a market (processor) for their catch.
When can I start fishing?	It depends on the specific Program fishery. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entry Level Fixed Gear Fishery – January 1 – November 15 • Entry Level Trawl Gear Fishery – May 1 – November 15 • Cooperatives (CFQ) – May 1 – November 15 • Limited Access Fishery (both CV and C/P Sectors) – July 1 – November 15 (or until catch limit is reached)
What are the requirements to form a cooperative?	<p>The requirements to form a cooperative differ for the LLP holders in the catcher vessel and catcher/processor sectors. Both sectors <u>must</u>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • submit an application by December 1 that is approved by NMFS, • have a cooperative contract that specifies specific terms and requirements, and • submit an annual report by December 15. <p>Additionally, the Catcher/Processor sector must be comprised of at least two LLP licenses (may be held by the same person)</p> <p>The Catcher Vessel sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must form in association with a processor to whom that LLP license has been assigned the plurality of its landings during a four-of-five year period selected by the processor. • A cooperative must include QS equal to at least 75 % of the QS of all primary rockfish species delivered to that processor

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	during the four-of-five year period selected by the eligible processor (see Processor Qualifying Period).
How much TAC is available for use by cooperatives as CFQ and in the limited access fishery as a program-specific TAC?	<p>For each primary rockfish species, the amount of TAC available for cooperatives and the limited access fisheries eligible is determined by the following procedure:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The total TAC for the species through the annual specification process is determined; 2. Then, the incidental catch allowances (ICAs) for bycatch needs in other non-rockfish fisheries are deducted. <p>The remaining amount is then multiplied by a fixed percentage specific to each species for the main program (cooperatives and limited access fisheries) and the entry-level portion of the fishery. These rates are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 95.0% for the cooperatives and the limited access fisheries, and • 5.0% for the entry level fishery. <p>Within the entry level sector, half of the total TAC for the three primary species is allocated to trawl catcher vessels, and half to fixed gear vessels. NMFS allocates Pacific ocean perch TAC first to the trawl gear, and any remaining TAC from pelagic shelf and northern rockfish. The remaining pelagic shelf and northern rockfish TAC is allocated to fixed gear vessels.</p> <p>For the main program, the amount remaining after this calculation is the TAC for that species (TAC_s).</p>
How much of the (TAC _s) for a particular rockfish species is distributed to the C/P sector, and how much to the CV sector?	The amount of TAC _s for primary rockfish species allocated to each sector is based on the proportion of the total QS assigned to that sector, which in turn is based on the historic harvest patterns (legal landings) from that sector. So, for any primary rockfish species, if most of the legal landings were made by the C/P sector, most of the QS and TAC _s for a species are allocated to that sector.
Can catch be “rolled over” from the entry-level fishery to cooperatives and the limited access fisheries mid-year?	No, although an intra-program “roll-over” can occur whereby any unharvested primary rockfish species in the entry level fishery allocated to trawl catcher vessels or fixed gear catcher vessels becomes available for harvest by both entry-level gear types on September 1,
How much of the TAC is allocated to cooperatives as CFQ	The amount of TAC for a specific primary species (TAC _s) is divided between cooperatives and the limited access fishery for each species in each sector. The method differs between the two sectors because an adjustment is required for the C/P sector to accommodate LLP license holders that choose to “opt out” of portions of the Program. Any CFQ of limited access TAC that would

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<p>and how much to the limited access fishery?</p>	<p>have resulted from the participation of those “opt-out” participants must be reallocated among the cooperatives and limited access fishery in the C/P sector. The equations used for each sector follow:</p> <p><u>Catcher/Processor Sector</u> Catcher/Processor Sector $TAC_s = [(TAC_s) \times (\text{Rockfish QS Units in the Catcher/Processor Sector}_s / \text{Rockfish QS Pool}_s)]$.</p> <p>$CFQ = [(Catcher/Processor \text{ Sector } TAC_s) \times (\text{Rockfish QS Units assigned to that Cooperative} / \sum \text{Rockfish QS Units assigned to all Rockfish Cooperatives and the Limited Access Fishery in the Catcher/Processor Sector})]$.</p> <p>Catcher/Processor Sector Rockfish Limited Access Fishery $TAC_s = [(Catcher/Processor \text{ Sector } TAC_s) - (\sum CFQ \text{ issued to Rockfish Cooperatives in the Catcher/Processor Sector})]$.</p> <p><u>Catcher Vessel Sector</u> Catcher Vessel Sector $TAC_s = [(TAC_s) \times (\text{Rockfish QS Units in the Catcher Vessel Sector}_s / \text{Rockfish QS Pool}_s)]$.</p> <p>$CFQ = [(Catcher \text{ Vessel Sector } TAC_s) \times (\text{Rockfish QS assigned to that Cooperative} / \text{Rockfish QS Units in the Catcher Vessel Sector}_s)]$.</p> <p>Catcher Vessel Sector Rockfish Limited Access Fishery $TAC_s = \text{Catcher Vessel Sector } TAC_s - (\sum CFQ \text{ issued to Rockfish Cooperatives in the Catcher Vessel Sector})$.</p>
<p>Are secondary species allocated to participants?</p>	<p>Yes, secondary species are allocated annually for usage by cooperatives as CFQ. Participants in the Limited Access or Opt-out fishery do not get a specific guaranteed allocation of these secondary species. Secondary species that are not allocated to cooperatives as CFQ are “left in the water” and are subject to MRAs that apply to the Limited Access Fishery and non-Rockfish Program participants. The amount of secondary species CFQ issued to a cooperative is based primarily on the aggregate primary rockfish QS held by the members of the cooperative. The secondary species that are allocated CFQ differ for the C/P and the CV sectors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperatives in both sectors are allocated CGOA trawl sablefish and CGOA thornyheads • C/P sector cooperatives are allocated shortraker and rougheye rockfish • CV sector cooperatives are allocated Pacific cod
<p>How much of these secondary species are</p>	<p>The specific amounts are based on the historic catch by eligible harvesters during the qualifying period compared to the total catch of all historic harvests. This amount is then divided among the CV and C/P sectors. Then, the amount of CFQ that is allocated to a</p>

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allocated?	<p>specific cooperative is based on the amount of Primary Rockfish Species QS assigned to that cooperative. Generally, the formula to allocate secondary species CFQ to a specific cooperative is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CFQ for that Secondary Species = maximum amount of that Secondary Species that may be allocated to the Sector in the Rockfish Program x (\sumRockfish QS Units assigned to that Rockfish cooperative/Rockfish QS Pool in the Sector).
Does the Program allocate halibut PSC for use by cooperatives and the limited access fishery?	<p>Yes, but halibut PSC is only assigned specifically to cooperatives. This amount of halibut PSC usage is deducted from the amount of halibut PSC assigned to the deep-water species complex halibut PSC limit. Halibut PSC usage by vessels in the limited access fishery is accommodated through the amount of halibut remaining in the deep-water species complex halibut prohibited species catch (PSC) limit.</p> <p>NMFS determines the maximum amount that may be allocated to cooperatives using the following procedures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sum the amount of halibut PSC by all vessels in the Central GOA Regulatory Area from January 1, 1996, until December 31, 2002. This is the Total Halibut PSC. Determine the amount of halibut PSC used by LLP licenses in the C/P sector and the CV sector from 1996-2002. For each sector (C/Ps then CVs) divide this amount by the Total Halibut PSC and multiply by 100. This is the percentage of Rockfish Halibut PSC assigned to that sector. Multiply the percentage of Rockfish Halibut PSC assigned to the sector by the GOA halibut PSC limit. This is the maximum amount of Rockfish Halibut PSC that may be allocated to the sector
What is the formula for allocating CFQ to a specific cooperative?	<p>The amount of CFQ allocated to a specific rockfish cooperative in a specific sector is calculated as follows:</p> <p>CFQ for Rockfish Halibut PSC = maximum amount of Rockfish Halibut PSC that may be allocated to the sector x (\sumRockfish QS Units assigned to that Rockfish Cooperative / Rockfish QS Pool in the sector).</p>
Can a vessel or LLP license participate in both a cooperative and a limited access or an opt-out fishery in the same year?	<p>No, each year a person must select either to participate in a cooperative, limited access fishery, or opt-out fishery in the catcher/processor sector through an annual application process.</p>
Does the Program establish specific maximum retainable	<p>Yes, the program establishes MRAs that are lower than those that apply under existing regulations – particularly trawl sablefish, and thornyhead rockfish for the limited access fishery. The MRAs established for the Program are detailed in Table 30 in the Proposed Rule. These MRAs are lower than current MRAs to make sure the fleet maintains harvests within historic levels and does not use</p>

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amounts (MRAs) for non-allocated species?	the benefits of rationalization to expand into other fisheries. Shortraker/rougeye in the CV sector, and Pacific Cod for the C/P sector have lower MRAs for both cooperatives and the limited access sector.
Does the Program establish a crab PSC allocation?	No
Are there QS holding or CFQ use caps that apply to a person?	Yes, see Table 5 in the preamble to the Proposed Rule. Briefly, a person cannot hold more than <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5.0 % of the Catcher Vessel aggregate primary species QS, or • 20.0% of the Catcher/Processor aggregate primary species QS. A person could not use, or have attributed to them more CFQ than results from these amounts. CFQ is attributed to a person if it is derived from QS held by that person or assigned to that person via an inter-cooperative transfer. All CFQ received by transfer must be assigned to a member of a cooperative, and be counted for purposes of applying this use cap.
Are there CFQ use caps that apply to a cooperative?	Yes, see Table 5 in the preamble to the Proposed Rule. A cooperative in the catcher/vessel sector may not use CFQ greater than the amount resulting from 20.0% of the aggregate QS assigned to the catcher vessel sector. There is no CFQ use cap for cooperatives in the catcher/processor sector.
Are there processing caps?	Yes, no eligible processor may process more than 30.0% of the TAC (includes CFQ and limited access fishery) assigned to the catcher vessel sector. Any processor that processed more than 30.0% of the TAC based on processing history held by that person at the time of Council action would be grandfathered at the amount held at the time of final Council action (June 6, 2005).
Are there vessel use caps?	Yes, but only in the catcher/processor sector. A vessel could not harvest more than 60.0% of the TAC (includes CFQ and limited access fishery) assigned to the catcher/processor sector. Any vessel that used to harvest more than this amount based on an LLP license originally issued for that vessel would be grandfathered in at the amount held at the time of final Council action (June 6, 2005). No vessels appear to meet this criteria.
Is an LLP license with the proper endorsement required to participate in the Program?	Yes, you must have an LLP license with a valid CGOA trawl endorsement to use a vessel to fish under the Program.
Can QS be transferred?	Yes, but QS is assigned to an LLP license and it is non-severable from that LLP license. To be eligible, a person would have to hold an LLP license and receive that license by transfer (using existing eligibility and transfer regulations).
Can CFQ be transferred among cooperatives?	Yes, subject to NMFS approval of an inter-cooperative transfer. Specific harvesting arrangements among the members of a cooperative (intra-cooperative transfers) are civil matters governed by the cooperative agreement.

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Are there sideboards under this Program?	<p>Yes, there are restrictions in the GOA and the BSAI on both vessels and LLP licenses that could be used to generate QS under this program. Please see the attached two-page Primer which summarizes the sideboards that apply under the Program. Catcher/Processors that choose to “opt out” would still be subject to sideboard restrictions (detailed in the Primer). The Program establishes a suite of sideboards that limit LLP holders participating in the Program from expanding their harvests in other fisheries. Sideboards apply only in July. Sideboards are limits, NOT allocations. There are two broad categories of sideboards – those that establish catch limits, and those that prohibit directed fishing. Catch limits are divided further into (1) limits on harvests in other GOA rockfish fisheries; and (2) halibut PSC limits on the amount of halibut mortality that can be used in GOA flatfish fisheries. Once sideboard limits are reached, directed fisheries are closed. Sideboards would apply in State waters in the “parallel” fishery.</p>
Are monitoring programs expanded under this program?	<p>Yes, this Program, like other quota programs, requires accounting of catch, and even more critically the use of halibut PSC. These allocations must be carefully monitored to ensure that other fishery participants in the Program are not affected by overages in quota, and to ensure that sideboard limits are maintained. These monitoring standards are similar to those under the American Fisheries Act and the CDQ Program. Expanded monitoring requirements apply to vessels fishing under a CFQ permit (for a cooperative), the Limited Access Fishery, and during July in the GOA when sideboard provisions apply. Catcher/Processor vessels that opt-out do not need to meet expanded observer requirements unless fishing in the GOA in July.</p>
What are some of the monitoring requirements?	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Please see the proposed rule regulatory language for specific requirements.</u></p> <p><u>Catcher/Processors:</u> When fishing under a CFQ permit, in the Limited Access Fishery, or in the GOA during July, the following are required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flow scales • Two observers (200% coverage) • No mixing of hauls • No more than one operational line or other conveyance for fish • Adequate observer sampling station • Bin observations: three options are available: no one in the bin, line of sight, and video options (see the proposed rule regulatory text for specific detail on these options) • VMS <p><u>Catcher Vessels:</u> When fishing under a CFQ permit, in the Limited Access Fishery, or in the GOA during July the following are required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% observer coverage when fishing under a CFQ permit

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VMS • A computer for observers to record data <p><u>On-shore Processors:</u> When receiving catch from the Rockfish Program, including the Entry-Level Fishery, the following are required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% observer coverage when receiving cooperative, limited access, and fish harvested in the GOA during July • Meet catch monitoring and control plan (CMCP) requirements.
Is there an Annual Report Required?	<p>Yes, it is due on December 15, and contains the following information.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Rockfish Cooperative's CFQ, Sideboard Limit (if applicable), and any Rockfish Sideboard Fishery harvests made by the vessels in the Rockfish Cooperative on a vessel-by-vessel basis; • The Rockfish Cooperative's actual retained and discarded catch of CFQ, and Sideboard Limit on an area-by-area and vessel-by-vessel basis; • A description of the method used by the Rockfish Cooperative to monitor fisheries in which Rockfish Cooperative vessels participated; • A description of any civil actions taken by the Rockfish Cooperative in response to any members that exceeded their allowed catch.
Is there an Economic Data Report required under the program?	No, but some limited economic data are required in the annual report.
What are the applications that are required under the Program?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Application to Participate (one time) – Due on December 1, 2006 2. Application for Entry Level Fishery Application – Due December 1 the year before you wish to fish 3. Annual Cooperative/Limited Access/Opt-out Application Fishery – Due December 1 the year before you wish to fish 4. Transfer of Processor Eligibility – Can be submitted at any time 5. Modification of CFQ permit to add/subtract a vessel – Can be submitted during the fishing season (May 1 – November 15) 6. Intercooperative CFQ transfer – Can be submitted during the fishing season (May 1 – November 15) 7. Termination of Fishing – Submitted when the cooperative is done fishing under the Program 8. Annual Report – Due on December 15 (beginning in 2007)
How can I comment on the Proposed Rule?	<p>You must submit your comments in writing by Monday, July 17.</p> <p>Comments can be submitted several ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mail: P.O. Box 21668, Juneau, AK 99802.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hand Delivery to the Federal Building: 709 West 9th Street, Room 420A, Juneau, AK. • Fax: 907-586-7557. • E-mail: 0648-AT71-CGRockfish@noaa.gov. Include in the subject line of the e-mail the following document identifier: Central Gulf Rockfish RIN 0648-AT71. E-mail comments, with or without attachments, are limited to 5 megabytes. • Webform at the Federal eRulemaking Portal: www.regulations.gov. Follow the instructions at that site for submitting comments.
Who do I contact if I have additional questions on the Proposed Rule and the Program?	<p>Glenn Merrill, at NOAA Fisheries in Juneau Phone: 907-586-7228 Email: glenn.merrill@noaa.gov.</p>
When would the Program be Implemented?	<p>The Secretary of Commerce (NOAA Fisheries) has to formally approve the Program. The Program would be approved after reviewing public comments on the Proposed Rule and reviewing the legal adequacy of the Program. If the Program is approved, NOAA Fisheries would publish a Final Rule – likely in Fall 2006. The Program would be effective 30 days after the final rule is published. NOAA Fisheries would then collect applications on December 1, review and process the applications, allocate QS and CFQ permits, the limited access fishery and sideboard catch limits. The Program would likely be fully implemented by March 2007, well before the 2007 cooperative, limited access, and entry level trawl fisheries seasons begin.</p>